

The State of Native Education

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Special Programs and Federal Accountability

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Executive Summary

This report addresses the accomplishments and recommendations of the Office of Native Education (ONE), a department of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). These accomplishments include:

- Refined the *Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State* web-based curriculum, and expanded professional development in utilization of the resource.
- Strengthened partnership efforts with the OSPI Environment and Sustainability Office focusing on the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in science instruction.
- As a result of [Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill \(E2SHB\) 1134](#) (authorizing OSPI to enter into State-Tribal Education Compacts to establish tribally controlled schools), negotiated and approved three Tribal Compact Schools: Muckleshoot Tribal School, Lummi Nation Schools, and Chief Kitsap Academy (Suquamish Tribe).
- Continued ongoing efforts to extend partnerships with Tribes and tribal organizations.

Introduction

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Office of Native Education (ONE) was established in the mid-1960s. In 2011, the passage of [House Bill 1829 \(RCW 28A.300.105\)](#) created the Office of Native Education within OSPI. ONE’s primary goal is to assist American Indian and Alaska Native students in achieving the basic education goals and meeting the state’s performance standards. ONE serves as a liaison between OSPI, school districts, tribal schools, tribal governments, Native communities, parents/guardians of Native children, Native organizations, and federal Title VII Indian Education Programs.

Duties include:

- Providing technical assistance and professional development opportunities to educators, counselors and parents.
- Providing information on effective practices used to work successfully with Native students, parents and Tribal communities.
- Developing and disseminating Native education language, history and cultural curriculum materials.
- Disseminating information about educational opportunities through ONE’s electronic events list.
- Seeking resources and opportunities to increase the number and quality of American Indian and Alaska Native teachers and administrators.

Native American Student Data

Native American students currently comprise about 6.2 percent of Washington state’s public school population. Native American students are typically reported as a smaller proportion of the population, however, due to federal reporting requirements. According to those requirements, there is a single determination of ethnicity and race for each student. A student who identifies themselves as part Hispanic will be reported as Hispanic, regardless of which other races the student identifies. Similarly, a student who identifies as Native American and another race will be categorized as Two or More Races. Thus, students who are American Indian and Alaska Native could actually be in one of three reported federal categories: Hispanic, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Two or More Races. The numbers reported in Table 1 distinguishes between the following three categories.

Table 1: Federal Race Roll-Up Categories for American Indian or Alaska Native Students

School Year	Native Race Category	K–12 Total Percentage	K–12 Total Enrollment
2013–14	American Indian or Alaska Native-Hispanic	48%	31,489
2013–14	American Indian or Alaska Native-Not Hispanic	26%	16,281
2013–14	American Indian or Alaska Native-Two or More Races	26%	17,560
TOTAL		100%	64,330

(Note: Data for year 2014–15 is not yet available)

Native non-Hispanic students (about 26 percent of all Native students enrolled in Washington’s public schools) is the only federal reporting category that clearly identifies American Indian or Alaska Native students, although they may be in two other categories. The data below represent Native students as only in the federal category of American Indian/Alaska Native, which underrepresent the actual Native population.

This significantly undermines the ability to get an accurate picture of Native student school performance and outcomes.

Table 2: On-Time Graduation Rate by Race

	2011–12	2012–13
All Students	77.2%	76.0%
Asian	84.4%	84.1%
Pacific Islander	64.5%	62.3%
Black	67.1%	65.4%
Hispanic	66.7%	65.6%
Native American*	56.8%	52.5%
Two or More Races	78.1%	76.2%
White	80.4%	79.4%

*Data gathered for Native Non-Hispanic students only (approximately 26 percent of Native students enrolled in Washington state public schools).

Reflecting a trend for all ethnic categories, Table 2 shows a 4.3 percent decrease in Native student on-time graduation rates from last year. Also, in comparison to all other categories, Native students’ graduation rate has consistently been the lowest.

Table 3: Extended Graduation Rate by Race

	2011–12	2012–13
All Students	78.9%	78.8%
Asian	86.1%	85.8%
Pacific Islander	66.6%	69.6%
Black	68.3%	67.7%
Hispanic	70.4%	70.0%
Native American*	56.6%	58.5%
Two or More Races	80.2%	78.5%
White	81.6 %	81.8%

*Data gathered for Native Non-Hispanic students only (approximately 26 percent of Native students enrolled in Washington state public schools).

Table 3 shows a 1.9 percent increase in the five-year graduation rate from the previous year. Again, although an increase in the five year adjusted cohort graduation rate of Native students is indicated

by the data, this population of students is still well below the students from other racial/ethnic groups.

Table 4: Annual Dropout Rate by Race

	2011–12	2012–13
All Students	13.6%	13.0%
Asian	8.3%	7.3%
Pacific Islander	20.7%	19.9%
Black	19.4%	18.2%
Hispanic	19.8%	18.8%
Native American*	26.8%	25.5%
Two or More Races	11.8%	12.6%
White	11.8%	11.3%

*Data gathered for Native Non-Hispanic students only (approximately 26 percent of Native students enrolled in Washington state public schools).

Table 4 shows a 1.3 percent dropout rate **decrease** from the previous year. However, Native American students have the highest dropout percentage rate across all student groups.

Office of Native Education (ONE) Highlights

Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum

[RCW 28A.320.170](#) encourages school boards to identify and adopt curricula that includes tribal experiences and perspectives to engage more Native students, support learning, and share Native history, government, and experiences with non-Native students. The intent is to embed the history of tribal sovereignty and inter-governmental responsibilities in Washington classrooms so all citizens understand the unique relationships of Tribes and tribal citizens in the state.

The *Since Time Immemorial Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum* has a menu of tribal sovereignty information, short lessons, and entire units for inclusion in U.S. History, Washington State History, and Contemporary World Problems. This web-based curriculum for Grades 4–12 is aligned with the grade level expectations, and Common Core State Standards in English language arts. It is available free online at www.indian-ed.org.

Between January 1, 2014, and November 1, 2014, ONE conducted 22 Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum all-day in-service workshops (including two advanced level trainings and two training of trainers), shorter workshops within a conference setting, and district-coordinated staff trainings. In 2014, 136 people participated in ONE sponsored full-day Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum training sessions, and 27 people participated in the two-day training of trainer workshops. To date, participants from 77 school districts, 3 private schools, 9 tribal schools, 24 Tribes, and many other organizations, universities, museums, and government agencies from inside and outside Washington have participated in the trainings (see Appendix A: Since Time Immemorial OSPI Hosted In-service Tribal Sovereignty Training Participants).

HB 1134 Tribal Compact Schools

[House Bill 1134](#) authorizes OSPI to enter into state-tribal education compacts and defines the requirements for schools that are subject to such compacts. Tribal compact schools affirm the state's commitment to honor the government-to-government relationship between OSPI, Tribes, and currently funded Bureau of Indian Education tribal schools. ONE staff collaborated with other appropriate OSPI staff to create new WACs ([Chapter 392-800](#) State-Tribal Education Compact Schools) to outline the policies and procedures for initiating the process of establishing a state-tribal education compact. Consultation meetings were held with tribal leaders and tribal school representatives to solicit their input. Three Tribes applied for and were approved as State-Tribal Education Compact Schools in 2014: Suquamish Tribe/Chief Kitsap Academy; Lummi Nation/Lummi Nation Schools; and Muckleshoot Indian Tribe/Muckleshoot Indian School. Three additional tribes have expressed an interest in pursuing a tribal compact school in 2015.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) Education Project

This new initiative involves hosting a series of symposiums in collaboration with OSPI's Environmental and Sustainability Office to determine if and how Indigenous Knowledge Systems can be part of the K-12 STEAM education system in Washington. The project vision is that STEAM education will be improved by highlighting connections with indigenous knowledge.

Washington Education Association's (WEA) Wisdom Seekers: Native Future Educator Symposium

WEA and Teaching Equity received a Gates Foundation grant to create an American Indian/Alaska Native teacher pipeline to recruit and retain Native educators from Washington's tribal communities. The project began with a focus on Native high school students. ONE is working with WEA to conduct annual Native youth symposiums with tribal community support, focused group research, and mentoring. Wisdom Seekers will help future Native educators navigate the education system while maintaining and integrating their Native cultural identity.

Western Washington Native American Education Consortium (WWNAEC) Educator Conference

ONE collaborated with the WWNAEC in planning and co-hosting their 2014 Educator Conference on February 27-28 at the Emerald Queen Hotel (Puyallup Tribe) in Fife. The focus was on Native students and science as well as the *Since Time Immemorial Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum*. Approximately 225 people attended in eight sessions focusing on science from a Native perspective. Presentations included information on Next Generation Science Standards and indigenous science education, environmental and sustainable standards in commonly used science units, games, sciences, watersheds, education, environment and the economy-sustainable communities presented by E3 Washington, and a mini-workshop on the "Since Time Immemorial" Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State Curriculum. The WWNAEC is mostly composed of Native education Title VII Program directors/coordinators in western Washington.

Washington State Indian Education Association (WSIEA) 2013 Conference

ONE collaborated with WSIEA in planning and co-hosting the 30th annual conference April 9-11 at the Northern Quest Hotel (Kalispel Tribe). This year's theme was "Cultivating Pathways for the Future of Native Students." Keynote speakers included Micah McCarty (Makah), Tribal Relations Director, The Evergreen State College, Denise Juneau (Blackfeet), Superintendent of Public Instruction, Montana, and Dr. Sheila Edwards Lange, Vice President for Minority Affairs, University

of Washington. Twelve workshops and a culture room were also offered. The second day of each WSIEA Conference also features “Native Student Day.” Native students participating in the 2014 WSIEA student day received information on scholarships, presentations by college recruiters, and access to about 20 college recruiters and scholarship organizations in attendance.

Planning for Native Educational Improvement

ONE has also been in contact with Education Northwest to identify and report on schools experiencing low achievement for Native students. A component of this collaboration includes conducting a Tribal Education Symposium with tribal leaders and tribal community members to develop a plan to improve these schools. There are a variety of Indian Education organizations. It would be valuable to bring all the separate agencies together to create a statewide team to impact Native student achievement.

National Indian Education Association (NIEA)/Common Core/Cultural Based Education

NIEA, in partnership with the ONE office, hosted two 3-day train the trainer events for certified teachers, administrators and others on the effective implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) which honors local languages and cultures. The first training in September took place at the Puyallup Tribes Youth Center and the second training in November took place at Heritage University in Toppenish. A total of 29 people attended these two trainings. Applying CCSS to lessons within the *Since Time Immemorial Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum* and making the standards culturally relevant were important components to this training. The training was funded by an NIEA grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Conclusion and Next Steps

ONE strategies for impacting Native student dropout/graduation rates:

- Ongoing collaboration with statewide Native organizations, Title VII Native program coordinators, educators, college recruiters, scholarship providers, etc., to provide Native students with information about upcoming college/career fairs, scholarship information, get the word out on “Native Student Information Days” on college campuses, continue working with the Washington State Indian Education Association and the Western Washington Native American Education Consortium to organize/conduct college/career fairs and Native student leadership opportunities. Native students who can realize their goals to attend college and pursue a career of their choice, will stay in school and graduate.
- Continue encouraging the inclusion of American Indian history and culture within the school curriculum through the “Since Time Immemorial” Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum. Native students need to see their history and culture represented in schools and that it is validated. This information for all students will also serve to dispel myths and common misrepresentations about Native people/Tribes.
- Working closely with college teacher education programs to provide information about the STI curriculum, Native student learning styles, etc., to future teachers.
- OSPI also has several efforts in place to meet the basic education goals and reduce dropout rates for all students.

Working in Collaboration with Tribes and Tribal Communities

Indian Education in Washington state moves forward. OSPI continues to focus its efforts on closing the achievement gap for American Indian and Alaska Native students.

The key to success for Native students depends upon strong relationships with Tribes, tribal communities, and Native parents. Because of the history of schooling of Native children, there is a historic adversarial relationship between Tribes and the federal government and/or the local non-Indian communities. Tribes, tribal communities, and Native parents have a distrust of state and national educational systems.

Significant gains have been made in strengthening relationships, but more needs to be done. The creation of Tribal Compact Schools establishes one avenue for stronger tribal control over education. Strong partnerships and increased state support are critical to increasing Native student educational achievement and success in life.

Providing Professional Development for School Personnel

With the creation of the *Since Time Immemorial Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum*, there are now resources available to impact teaching. However, too few educators have taken advantage of the opportunity to acquire new, accurate, culturally sound training. Efforts to encourage the participation of all district personnel in the use of these important resources remains a focus.

Acknowledgments

The Office of Native Education would like to thank the Tribes within Washington state for their ongoing support of our office and the *Since Time Immemorial Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum*. Their financial and in-kind contributions have made all the difference in the ongoing development and implementation of this online curriculum.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Since Time Immemorial OSPI Hosted In-Service Tribal Sovereignty Training Participants

School districts represented: 77

Anacortes	Hood Canal	Quillayute Valley
Auburn	Hoquiam	Renton
Battle Ground	Inchelium	Seattle
Bethel	Issaquah	Shelton
Bremerton	Keller	Shoreline
Brewster	Kelso	Snohomish
Burlington-Edison	Kent	Snoqualmie Valley
Castle Rock	LaConner	South Kitsap
Central Kitsap	Lake Washington	Spokane
Central Valley	Lynden	Stanwood-Camano
Cheney	Marysville	Sultan
Chimacum	Mead	Tacoma
Clover Park	Medical Lake	Taholah
Cusick	Monroe	Toppenish
Darrington	Mount Adams	Tumwater
Eastmont	Mount Baker	Union Gap
East Valley	Muckilteo	Vancouver
Edmonds	Nooksack Valley	Wapato
Ellensburg	North Kitsap	White River
Enumclaw	North Thurston	Yakima
Everett	Okanogan	Yelm
Federal Way	Olympia	
Ferndale	Omak	
Fife	Pasco	
Goldendale	Pioneer	
Grand Coulee Dam	Port Angeles	
Griffin	Puyallup	
Highline	Queets-Clearwater	

Private schools represented: 3

Charles Wright Academy/Tacoma
St. George School/Seattle
St. Matthews School/Seattle

Tribal schools represented: 9

Chemawa Indian School/Oregon	Lummi Tribal Schools	Quileute Tribal School
Chief Kitsap Academy/Suquamish	Muckleshoot Tribal School	Wa He Lut Community School
Chief Leschi Schools	Paschal Sherman Indian School	Yakama Tribal School

Tribes represented: 24

Coeur d'Alene	Muckleshoot	Snoqualmie
Cowlitz	Nooksack	Stillaguamish
Colville	Port Gamble S'Klallam	Suquamish
Jamestown S'Klallam	Puyallup	Swinomish
Kalispel	Quinault	Tulalip
Lower Elwha S'Klallam	Samish	Umatilla
Lummi	Sauk Suiattle	Upper Skagit
Makah	Skokomish	Yakama

Other participants:

Benton Conservation District	Northwest Museum of Art and Culture
Cascadia Community College	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Central Washington University	Puget Sound ESD 121
Dept. of Social and Health Services	Renton History Museum
Dynamic Arts	St. Martins University
Eastern Washington University	Seattle Indian Health Board
Educational Service District 105	Skagit Valley Historical Society
Educational Service District 113	Skykomish Valley Indian Education Program
Fast Forward Consulting	Snohomish Arts Council
Fort Simcoe Job Corps	Spokane Tribal College
Franklin Conservation District	The Evergreen State College
Gen YES	Thrive by Fife
Governor's Office of Indian Affairs	Tribal Law/Yakama
Gonzaga University	University of Montana
Heritage University	University of San Diego
Imagine Children's Museum	University of Washington
King County Library System	Washington Education Association
Muckleshoot Tribal College	Washington State Board of Education
National Education Association	Washington State House of Representatives
National Indian Education Association	Washington State Library
National Park Service/Walla Walla	Washington State University
North Central ESD	Western Washington University
Northwest Justice Project	Whitman College
Northwest Indian College/Lummi	Whitman Mission/National Park Service
Northwest Indian College/Nisqually	Yakama Indian Nation Library

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